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“There Is Glamour for Young and Old in the Winter Holiday”

## WINTER HOLIDAYS IN PALM BEACH

THAT it can be winter in one place while it is summer in another is the simplest fact of geography, yet it is for most of us a constant marvel. When the snow flies in our native North we childishly feel it to be quite impossible that in the South, so easily attainable in a Pullman car, the groves are fragrant with white blossoms. Yet such is the case; and, how much so, is described for us by Harrison Rhodes in his entertaining volume, "In Vacation America," published by Harper & Brothers.

Just to see the palmetto's plumy crest against the blue of the sub-tropic sky or the orange's gold against the glossy green of the foliage is a holiday. Merely to put on a linen suit and sit reading of blizzards in the North is a vacation. There is a quite absurd thrill which goes through one upon picking one's first orange from the tree. Stories of the old days of plenty in Florida, when heaping baskets of the fruit stood in hotel offices for the free use of the guests, now sound like legends of some earlier Arcadian golden age.

The shortest Southern trip has always something exotic and adventurous in it; in a quiet New England village a great position of authority in the community may be founded upon a trip to Florida. Indeed, over the southern horizon toward the Gulf, the Indies, and old Mexico there always flickers and dances the will-o'-the-wisp of romance leading the tourist on with memo-

ries of the gay antebellum time and earlier cloudier legends of Spanish days, of the Fountain of Youth and the golden sands of El Dorado. There is glamour for young and old in the winter holiday, and for the latter what might at least be termed a fighting chance of finding weather warm enough to reach the marrow of their old bones. If letters from "the folks at home" convey the welcome news that they are shivering in arctic airs, the last touch of geniality is added to the Southern sun.

For a real lover of the great, queer, desolate, flat peninsula there is always some hint of magic in even the modernest manifestations and hotels. Palm Beach, for example, was built almost in a single night, and though it has now existed long enough to make even the most skeptical have some faith in its permanency, it still suggests how the maker of this region did "himself a stately pleasure-dome decree" upon the eastern coast. It would not be hard to believe that when April comes and the last black "bell-hop"—slave of the ring—has answered the last visitor's call, the whole phantasmagoria sinks beneath the sands like some palace in an Arabian tale, to reappear when the magician again starts his limited trains a-running and sends evil frosts to desolate the North.

Palm Beach is our most satisfactory achievement in watering-places along the traditional European lines. It has as preposterously short and perfervid

a season as Trouville or Deauville. It has prices—if you insist on them—as high and as really exhilarating as those at Monte Carlo; you believe, at least while you abandon yourself to the Palm Beach spell, that not to be rich is something unworthy and discreditable, something not to be mentioned before nice people. The presence in the lobbies of sightseeing tourists from cheaper hotels nearby merely accentuates one's own feeling of wealth, just as the coming

wheel-chair idleness the more attractive. In the same way watching the bathers from under a striped awning competes on fair terms with bathing itself. And eating and drinking here tend to become not only kings of indoor, but of outdoor sports. The games of chance, too, which so enliven the quest of rest and health abroad, are discreetly provided, and in the agreeable confusion of the tables certain ideals of democracy—that is to say,



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The Wheel-Chair at Palm Beach

of occasional little groups of Seminole Indians makes more vivid one's sense of how incredible this luxury is in what was only so short a time ago a remote wilderness at the edge of the trackless mystery of the Everglades.

Palm Beach is fantastically rich and idle and gay—and useless, if you like. It is a kind of dream of blazing flower-gardens and allées of palms. Its most characteristic sport is the wheel-chair—the Afro-mobile, so called from the black slave of the pedal who propels you. The golfers who languidly dot the flat green seem only to do it that they may make

ideals for the fraternizing of the rich—are satisfied.

Indeed, one of the chief recommendations of Palm Beach is the fact that all its gaiety is in the open. The only thing private about the resort is the private car which is ordinarily used by people going there, and lately it is said that even this is not absolutely *de rigueur*. Life is lived wholly in the public eye, except in the few hours devoted to sleep, and even then the somewhat thin construction of the hotels makes the night yield only a qualified seclusion—one is still in the public ear.